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New power sale paints Tacoma Power green Northwest watersheds to benefit from BPA, Tacoma agreement

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Bonneville Power Administration

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PORTLAND, Ore. – Electricity customers of Tacoma Power soon will be able to express their environmentalism in a new way: through their electric bill.

The utility has agreed to purchase one megawatt of environmentally preferred power from the Bonneville Power Administration, and, beginning today, its customers will be able to sign-up with the utility to support that power purchase. One megawatt will serve the average needs of roughly 600 homes.

The Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF), an independent nonprofit organization that facilitates green power sales by BPA and other utilities in the region, will receive a share of the premium charged for this power. The foundation will use that premium to restore Northwest watersheds and develop new renewable energy projects.

"We are excited about both the power purchase and the retail offering on which it is based," said Steven J. Klein, superintendent of Tacoma Power. "We believe it is a good thing to do for our customers and our environment. Based on our customers' response to this pilot project, we may purchase more green power in the future."

The city's public utility board approved the environmentally preferred power sale, signing the contract on April 14. Tacoma intends to offer the power to its retail customers beginning today, but billing won't start until June 1 when power deliveries begin.

The 16-month agreement is the ninth environmentally preferred power sale BPA and BEF now have in place. Nearly 22 megawatts of BPA's environmentally preferred power have been sold across the West.

"The BPA/BEF partnership is working," said Angus Duncan, president of the foundation. "Together we are building a demand for new renewable resources that will produce truly sustainable power."

Power for the Tacoma sale will come from a resource mix of wind and hydroelectric generation designated as an environmentally preferred resource. Solar, landfill gas and additional wind resources

will soon be included as well. As demand for this power grows, even more resources could be added.

BPA's supplies of environmentally preferred power are endorsed by three leading environmental organizations: Natural Resources Defense Council, Renewable Northwest Project and Northwest Energy Coalition.

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